

Middle-East New-Media • A Weekly Coverage • Editor: Orit Perlov

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Egypt



Does the Presidency Go to the MBs?

Karim Mohy

Red Flags Surround Abouel Fotouh's Candidacy



"I want to believe in Abouel Fotouh, but one should not be forced into the position of hoping he will be tolerant and unite Egypt, while at the same time fearing he is a wolf in sheep's clothing. To resolve this cognitive dissonance, the onus is on Abouel Fotouh to act with transparency and to clarify his political positions. ***If Abouel Fotouh wants to retain the trust of his diverse voter base, he must remain principled and consistent, and leave the double-talk and flip-flopping to Amr Moussa"***

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Bassem Sabry

Quick Guide: Who Are Egypt's Final 13 Presidential Candidates



"Out of a total of 23 official Egyptian Presidential candidates, ten were surprisingly disqualified, including three of the strongest candidates and leading contenders. Below is a very quick list of who the 13 remaining candidates are"

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A Look at TV and Online Ads of Egyptian Presidential Candidates



"The Egyptian Presidential elections are happening, so it seems, and we're less than 3 weeks to go before the "official" dates for the first round of elections, May 23rd and 24th. With the official ban on campaigning over, here are some of the ads by the main candidates thus far"

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#Monazarat - Egyptian candidates' Debate



Storyful

#Monazarat's the word as Egyptian candidates' debate



"The first televised debate in the 2012 Egyptian presidential race was held Thursday night. It continued into the early hours of Friday morning as the two frontrunners, former diplomat Amr Moussa and moderate Islamist Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh (above), battled for supremacy. Some of the issues discussed were raised by the public via a Twitter hashtag: #Monazarat (meaning 'debates' in Arabic)"

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Moftasa

Transcript of round 1: Mousa vs Fotouh Debate #Monazarat

For the Full Transcript – Part 1

Transcript of round 2 of Debate between Abo Fotoh and Moussa #monazarat

For the Full Transcript – Part 2



Zeinobia

#Monazarat: The Day after the Presidential Debate

*"**There is something different in the air without doubt**, there is something different indeed because from two years ago nobody has ever imagined that millions of Egyptians would stay up late to watch for 90 minutes a long presidential elections debate between two popular presidential candidates Abdel Moneim Abu El Fotoh and Amr Moussa for the first time in their Republic political history. **Today the first question you ask your friends and relatives on the phone is "What do you think about the debate?", "which candidate was better?". Today men in mosques discussed the debate and despite some of them were already lobbying for his favorite candidate**, yet there are discussion and huge interest in knowing and choosing the next president of Egypt"*

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Al-Thani Faisal

#Preisdential Debate , how many Arab rulers are living a nightmare tonight and wish that this debate was a dream and how many Arab citizens are happy for this debate



Dr. Salman Al-odah

Egypt remains the inspiring leader. Egypt inaugurates a new era of presidential debates in the Islamic and Arab world



Nervana Mahmoud

Egypt Presidential Candidate Aboul Fotouh "Mr Relative"

"When Einstein created his clever theory of relativity, he focused his work on time and space. Today, political analysts have extended the application of his theory to a completely different sphere; redefining political Islam. The

excitement about the Islamic spring and the potential for political Islam to embrace democracy has seduced ***many in the name of relativity to label some Egyptian Islamists such as presidential candidate Aboul Fetouh as 'liberal."*** *[.....] "****Dr. Aboul Fetouh perceived liberalism is a good indicative of the current state of affairs in Egypt, where grey is white just because it is not black.*** *In another words, benign conservatism is liberalism because we can swallow its milder rhetoric without feeling the urge to vomit"*

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Ashraf Khalil

Moussa, Aboul Fotouh Spar in Egypt's Epic First Presidential Debate

"Among wide swaths of the Egyptian population, the public discussion has shifted from whether the revolution has failed to exactly who is to blame for the assumed failure. ***It's hard to tell whether post-Mubarak Egypt is heading into a golden age or an emotional collapse****"*

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Salama Moussa

Moussa's Riposte

"The debate between Moussa and Aboul Fotouh was a good day for Egypt on many levels. On one critical issue Mr. Moussa reached deep into the Egyptian collective psyche and asked the difficult question about political Islamism (as opposed to Islam). Is loyalty to the Muslim Brotherhood synonymous or even compatible with loyalty to Egypt?"

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Ashraf Khalil

Democracy's Growing Pains

"Through the years, Egyptians became accustomed to elections—Mubarak faced voters five times—but they gained little experience in democracy. Little wonder then, that the democratic transition has been so muddled. It may be that the country will spend considerably more time at the crossroads, without moving decisively on issues ranging from the powers of the state to the role of Islam in society. ***Egypt's next president will take the helm of a country on the cusp of a renaissance and on the verge of a nervous breakdown.*** *Whatever the outcome, the presidential election of*

2012 is giving Egyptians the first real choice they have ever had to select one of their own to lead their country"

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Egyptian Media Culprit or Victim?



Hany Farouk Ghoraba

The show must go on: Egyptian Media culprit or victim?

"It will certainly take many years of trials and errors for Egyptian TV networks to meet the some of the standards set by their western counterparts but the 1000 miles road always start by one single step. However, that will not be ever achieved without a strict code of ethics that doesn't deviate from international standards of media for freedom of expression while maintaining the fine line between objectivity and bias"

Read More – Egyptian Media

Female Circumcision



Bassem Sabry

The MB and Female Circumcision/FGM

"Speaking now on Egypt's CBC Channel in a "meet your presidential candidate" type of event, the FJP/MB's Mohammed Morsy was asked by a female doctor and panelist what he thought about recent calls to apparently "revise" the law banning FGM/Female Circumcision in Egypt. The candidate embarked on a long and vague answer which left a few, including the doctor herself, uncertain to a considerable extent as to his concise statement of position. But most of the people I have spoken to agree that the candidate seems to be suggesting that it should be the prerogative of the family to decide if they want their daughter to undergo it or not"

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Security Measures Instead of Political Framework

Bahrain Politics Blog



The Securitization of "the Shi'a Problem" in Bahrain

Those in control of Bahrain seem to have come to the conclusion that ***not only the state's previous policies, but indeed its entire political strategy since the initiation of King Hamad's ostensible reform project in 2001, is no longer working****. Whether this is because the faction led by King Hamad has been overruled, or because it has finally come over to the view of more security-minded members of the Al Khalifa, the upshot is the same:* ***Bahrain will seek to address the current crisis within a security-rather than a political-framework****, for it is only through such an effort, by this thinking, that stability (or something like it) can be achieved. And so long* ***as the country is under no external pressure to alter this new course, there would seem to be little reason to abandon it"***

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US Failing Strategy

"How NOT to Help the Crown Prince" On the inevitable failure of the newest U.S. attempt at a Bahrain strategy



"News comes today that the parting gift from Crown Prince Salman's trip to Washington last week was the resumption of some U.S. arms sales to Bahrain. It doesn't take a genius, of course, to see the purpose behind this sure-to-be-controversial move, namely the (attempted) reversal of Sh. Salman's utter political marginalization since his failed attempt to negotiate an end to the March 2011 crisis"

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Saudi & Egypt MB's - A New Romance



Sultan al-Qassemi (a UAE-based commentator on Arab affairs)

The Brotherhood goes to Saudi

"It is quite ironic that a protest by Egyptian activists against the Saudi government resulted in a rapprochement between that very government and Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood. ***However, based on the public statement on the Brotherhood, Saudi Arabia's next King may take a lot more than sweet talk or a broad-based delegation to win over the Brotherhood's most skeptical adversary****"*

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Ahmed Al Omran

Royal Rules in Saudi Arabia

"We have a new young generation, beginning to assert itself. ***Change will come to Saudi Arabia****. The government cannot stop it.* ***There is nothing that they can do to reverse the tide of history****"*

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Saudi Women - Driving For Freedom



Rasheed Abou-Alsamh

The struggle of Saudi women

"The winds of change were blowing in Saudi Arabia long before the uprisings of the Arab Spring, and I'm seeing this mostly in the streets and shops of Jeddah. Last year a handful of women at the wheel of cars drove through the streets of several cities of this conservative and sexist kingdom. They filmed themselves doing it, and posted the resulting videos on YouTube for the world to see, but mostly so that other Saudi women could see that, yes, women can drive a car, and the world did not end"[.....] "These are positive signs for Saudi society, but ***much remains to be done. If Saudis remain steadfast, the country will be on a path of justice and freedom for all, regardless of gender****"*

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Manal Al-Sharif ***The time of silence is over***



Driving for Freedom – My Speech in Oslo Freedom Forum

"Our generation is called the Sahwa or Awakening Generation. Our story starts with the year I was born in, 1979. That same year a group of men led by the militant Juhayman seized the holy mosque in Mecca, the holiest shrine for Muslims in the world. The siege was to protest the House of Saud's policies of Westernization. Saudi authorities used heavily-armed forces to end the siege. They publicly beheaded Juhayman and other 46 men. This overlooked episode of modern history was described as the deadliest terrorist attack prior to 9/11. This forgotten event shaped my generation's life and changed the world, into the one we know today"

I believe that children cannot be free of their mothers are not free, parents cannot be free if their daughters are not free, husbands cannot be free if their wives cannot be free, society is nothing if women are nothing.

For me, freedom starts within. Here (my heart) I know I am free, ***but there, in Saudi, I am certain the struggle has just began, the struggle will end but I am not sure when, the struggle is not about driving a car, the struggle is about being in the driver's seat of our destiny, about being free not just to dream but free to live****"*

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Syria

Weapons vs. Negotiations' is a False Choice



Open Security

Syria's crisis: a credible threat is what is needed

"The escalation of regime violence is not a response to the rise of an armed opposition, but the reaction of the Assad regime to a popular uprising that

has demonstrated remarkable resilience. Without a credible threat, ***'Weapons vs. Negotiations' is a false choice****."*

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Pillars of the Syrian Regime are Collapsing

Marc Lynch

Main Pillars of the Syrian Regime Collapsing by Joshua Landis

"The main pillars of the Syrian regime are collapsing one after the other. The closing of the University of Aleppo signifies the beginning of the end for public education. It will only be the first of the universities to close. Most are trying to limp to the end of the academic year, but they will probably not be able to open in the fall. Students are becoming mobilized and radicalized"

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Lebanon

Hezbollah - Image Overhaul

NOW Lebanon

Behind the promise of a new Dahiyeh

"The goal, of Hezballah, is to portray a new image of the Party of God, one that is concerned with improving the basic human needs of the people while also highlighting the state's failure to do so. ***"The overall message is that Hezbollah is progressive and a constructive group in the country, not only destructive... that Hezbollah resists Israel but it also rebuilds" and is capable of completing "a huge project that the government couldn't do."*** *[....] "* ***The Dahiyeh achievement is being used as part of an image overhaul to cover up Hezbollah's shortcomings****"*

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#10Mai - The Islamists Lost the Elections

The Economist

Still waiting for real democracy

*"Some say that certain people in "le pouvoir" know that real democracy cannot be postponed indefinitely. Two days before the elections, Mr Bouteflika said that "my generation has had its time." **The elections will give at least some indication of who might run the country if ordinary people were allowed a real say. There is no sign they will have it soon**"*

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Al Jazeera English

Algerian Islamic leader opposes election

"Ali Belhadj is a hardline advocate of political Islam with a history of inspiring protests in Algeria, and he is a vocal opponent of the legislative elections.In 1988, Belhadj became a leader of the street protests that forced the Algerian regime to introduce democratic reforms for the first time. He then became the vice-president of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), a party advocating an Islamic form of government which quickly won over disenfranchised Algerians hungry for change. The military staged a coup d'état on the eve of almost certain victory for the party. The FIS has been illegal ever since, but in recent months, Belhadj has once again been rallying supporters in mosques across the country against Algeria's May 10 legislative elections"

Full Interview

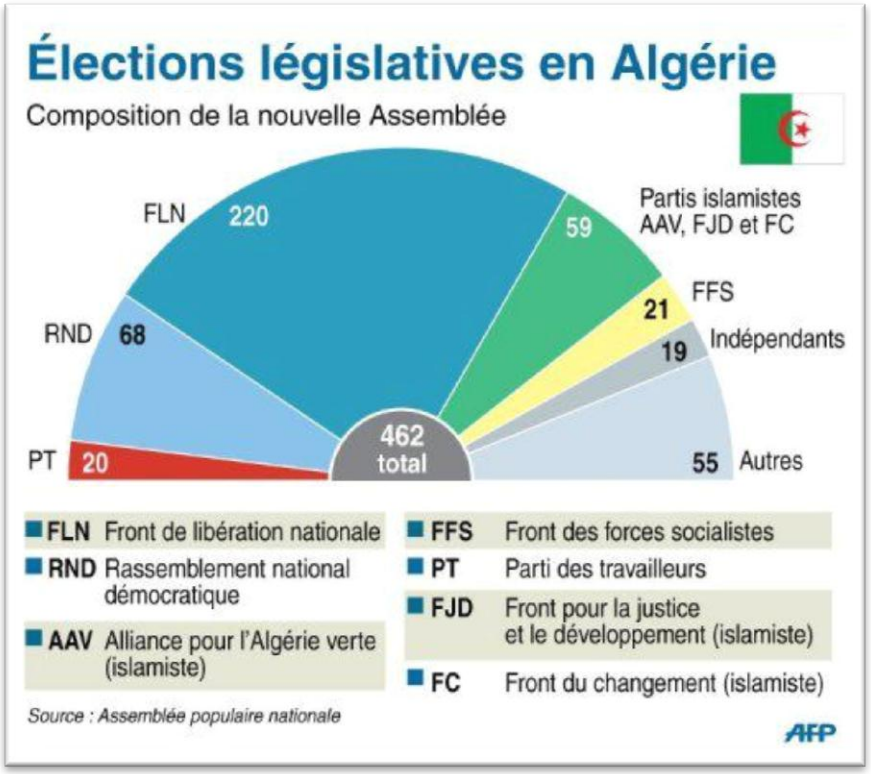


No dessert for those who don't vote

Jadaliyya

Algerian Elections 10 may

"While Algeria may not have seen protests on the scale of its regional neighbors, many Algerians are expressing their political dissent through abstention. On Twitter, the hashtag #10MaiToz was used to post various updates pertaining to police crackdowns on minor protests and voter fraud, with reports of registration under the names of dead people used to vote"



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Anissa B.

Algerian Elections - Official results - FLN 220 seats, RND 68 seats, Islamists 59 seats, FFS 21 seats.

According to the RCD which boycotted the elections turnout didn't exceed 18%.

Yemen

#NoDrones - Against US Policy



Noon Arabia

We will start a twitter war against Drones in Yemen as the US continues to kill civilians in the name of "war on terror". #NoDrones

Yemen: Anger at Expansion of US Drone War

"The United States has recently expanded its campaign of drone strikes in Yemen, to widespread anger and concern. Drone strikes against suspected Al Qaeda operatives have been launched under expanded authority allowing the CIA and military to fire based only on the targets' intelligence "signatures" or patterns of behavior, without knowing their identity"

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Patience is Over - Instead of Terrorists Civilians are being Killed



Nasser Arrabyee

20 Al Qaeda fighters, 8 soldiers killed in preparation for 'Bigger Battle'

"A total of 28 people were killed Saturday in clashes and shelling between Al Qaeda fighters and Yemeni army that says it is preparing for the " decisive and historic" battle for eradicating terrorism in the south, said military and local sources"

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Libya

National Transitional Council – Saving Its Legacy



Muftah

Five Goals for Libya's National Transitional Council

*"When the National Transitional Council (NTC) was formed back in February 2011 — as the city of Benghazi celebrated its liberation from the Gaddafi regime — the administration, touting democratic ideals and peddling post-Gaddafi fantasies, was a beacon of hope for so many Libyans. Even for those reluctant to believe in the stealthy conversions of some NTC members from ex-Gaddafi handymen to proselytizers of peace and freedom, the NTC signified a notable step forward for the revolution and a tangible result of the struggle for which so many had died. For so long, Libya's government was a one-man show starring one of the most ridiculed, caricatured figures in Arab politics. But the NTC — for a while, at least — has an opportunity to rewrite history" [....] "**There is little, if anything, the NTC could do to salvage the support of the Libyan people, but it still has an opportunity to save its legacy"***

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#PalHunger – It's the Final Countdown

Mondoweiss

'Battle of the Empty Stomachs': Thaer Halahleh and Bilal Diab surpass 70 days on hunger strike



"Hundreds protest in solidarity with Palestinian hunger strikers Hundreds of people have protested in the West Bank in solidarity with Palestinian prisoners being held by Israel. People gathered in Al Manara Square in Ramallah on Tuesday, as almost 2,000 Palestinian prisoners entered the fourth week of a hunger strike.

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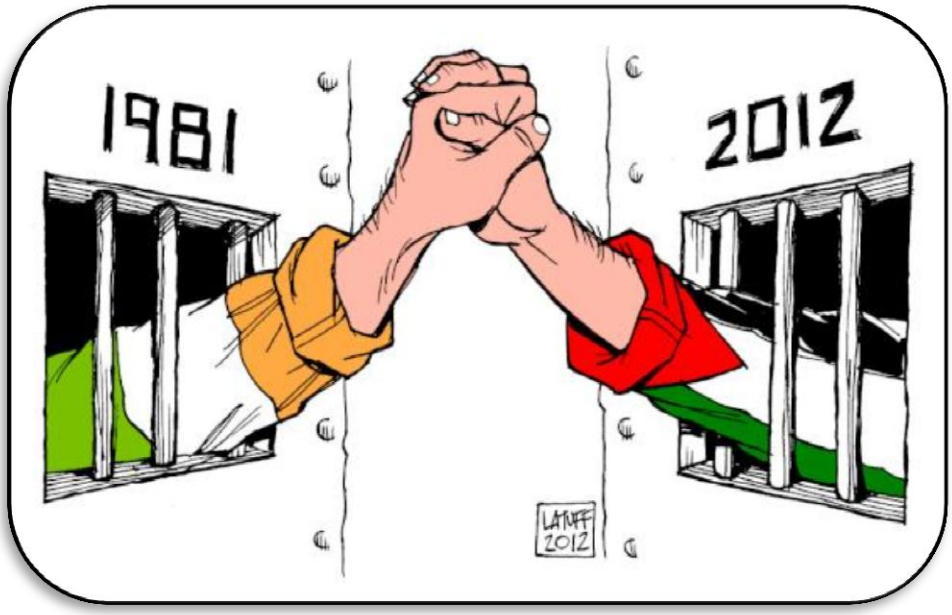
This piece shows the solidarity between the Irish & PalHunger Strikers

Electronic Intifada



"As long as we're living on these holy lands of Palestine, we'll never get fed up giving any sacrifice. These unjust and unsecure lives we're leading are the source of our inner strength and determination. If that wasn't the case, you wouldn't see me now hunger striking in solidarity with my son, the living martyr, hoping to celebrate his freedom soon."

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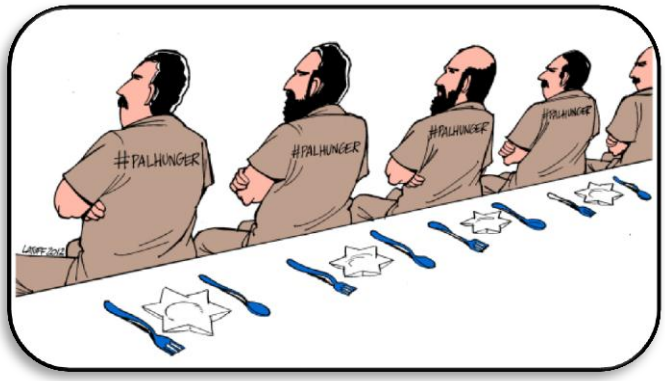
Maath Musleh

From Ramleh to the World: Can You Hear Us?



"Deir Yassin was caught on camera. Sabra and Shatila was caught on camera. Breaking bones in the First Intifada was also caught on camera. A long list of Israeli atrocities, attacks and massacres, have been caught on camera. It does not really matter. We cleared our hard disks several times to make space for more documentation. We have enough documentation of our sufferings. We now want to make space to document our victories and triumphs. We will not document them with our cameras; we will document our victories with our blood"

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Rachel Shabi

A letter from Thaer Halahleh, on day 75 of hunger strike against his detention without charge, to his two-year-old daughter Lamar, who he has never seen. Translated by Jalal Najjar.

Read the Letter





